

**Bedford Housing Partnership
February 26, 2015**

Present: Irma Carter, Jean Hammond, Ellis Kriesberg, Kate Moskos, Lisa Mustapich, Jane Puffer, Alice Sun, Christina Wilgren, Kristopher Washington,
Others present: Jessica Porter, Assistant Town Manager, Beth Rust, RHSO
Absent: Mike Rosenberg, Selectman

Kriesberg called the meeting order at 7:30

Minutes of December 14, 2014

Mustapich moved (Kriesberg seconded) to approve the minutes of January 15 with minor corrections.

VOTE: 9-0-2 Wilgren and Sun abstaining.

Review of funds and potential projects

Currently the BHP source of funding is through Community Preservation Commission funds (housing reserve is \$1.17 million), MAHT funds (\$460K transferred from former Bedford Housing Trust funds), and approximately \$20K per year from the HOME program. CPC funds are controlled by Town meeting vote. MAHT funds can be accessed directly by board members bypassing TM vote. Home funds are voted through Selectmen. The only recurring funds are CPC and Home. Members noted that there are already projected uses for these funds. The Coast Guard housing is still not resolved. MAHT may need those funds to leverage inclusion of affordable housing units. We can expect to spend about \$600K to finish the Ashby Place improvements. We will need \$45K if we want to continue the grant program. We need to keep some funds in reserve for possible expiring use of Bedford Village in 2018. Rust stated that there are units reaching expiration now across the state. RHSO checks progress periodically. When the date gets closer, the town should contact the owner- still Irma Schretter? Perhaps CPC funds could be used to aid in making improvements – like windows, insulation. etc. It is critical for Bedford to keep these 96 units in the AH Inventory. Could we use the HOME funds for rent subsidies? A long discussion followed: Once funds were committed, it would be hard to “take them back.” Perhaps we could subsidize a security deposit, or pay utilities for a period of time. Emergency – short term commitments would work best since funds are limited. Sun stressed that she would not be in favor of paying rent as this would be like providing welfare. Washington preferred using funds not as ongoing subsidy but as a bridge in response to an emergency –e.g. due to loss of job, or medical health problems. Such a bridge amount could prevent homelessness due to loss of job or medical emergency. We would need to set up an application and tenant selection process. Surrounding towns have programs. Rust will see what is being done locally. This would be a good use for HOME funds.

Mustapich moved – (Moskos seconded) to table the use of HOME funds for now to allow a fund to build up until a more substantial amount is available.

VOTE 9-0-1 Wilgren abstained Motion passed.

Buy Down

Rust reported that Sudbury has a program called Home Preservation Program. She noted that, because of the timing, you have to have a buyer (or buyers) lined up before you get a house. Property also has to be well maintained. Several towns are successfully done this program

VA Housing

Nothing new to report

Coast Guard Housing

MAHT discussed appraisals at last meeting. GSA has hired Avery Associates to do its appraisal and expect to have results in a couple of weeks. Results should be similar since we are using same guidelines.

Reed will head the negotiating team for the town. Rust and Gaulin are doing a pro forma on one of the options.

Life Management

Puffer reported that first meeting of the candidates with CTI, Lowell. 15 people originally showed an interest. CTI has scheduled another meeting on March 8. Participants need to be tenants in Bedford Housing units. CTI offers programs in education, life skills, free tax information, babysitting, and will send a newsletter to all eligible. Acton and Lexington are interested in a similar program.

Other BHA

Kitchen rehab is at the architectural phase.

Fair Housing

No issues

Meeting adjourned at 9pm

Next meeting

Thursday, March 19 8pm following MAHT meeting

Recorded: Irma Carter

Approved April 16, 2015